



City of Tigard

Tigard City Council Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2012

1. SPECIAL MEETING - December 18, 2012

- A. Mayor Dirksen called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.
- B. Roll Call

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Present</u> | <u>Absent</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Mayor Dirksen | ✓ | |
| Council President Buehner | ✓ | |
| Councilor Henderson | ✓ | |
| Councilor Wilson | ✓ | |
| Councilor Woodard | ✓ | |

- C. Pledge of Allegiance

2. MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE REPORT

Mayor Dirksen introduced this agenda item. The mayor brought the Blue Ribbon Task Force together to consider different financial options the city might look to in the future. He referred to his 2011 State of the City address where he summarized the city's financial situation and challenges we were facing to our commitment in the city to maintain financial stability while still providing the level of service the city organization and the citizens expect.

This group consisted of prominent citizens who reviewed the city's circumstances to determine if there were possible courses of action that the city could take. Several Task Force members were present to share the outcome of their work.

Assistant City Manager Newton served as the facilitator to the Task Force. The Task Force was convened around the question: *If Tigard were to acquire a new public dollar, what would it fund and where would that come from?* Ms. Newton said that, to a person, each member of the Task Force

viewed the City of Tigard as a community. The city has a role in providing services to the community and a role in making Tigard a great place to live and work.

Assistant City Manager Newton read the names of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Task Force:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Barry Albertson | Bob Smith |
| David Burke | Fire Chief Michael Duyck |
| Dan Goodrich | Jason Rogers |
| Jessica Cousineau | State Representative Margaret Doherty |
| Mark Haledman | Melody Graeber |
| Mike Stevenson | Sue Yesilada |
| Tom Woodruff | Troy Mears |

Finance and Information Services Department Director LaFrance said his role to the group was to provide information they needed to develop their recommendations. Tonight the Task Force will present their six recommendations.

Recommendation 1 – Financial Stability/Services – Presented by Task Force Member Dan Goodrich:

- Strengths of the city for focus.
 - A fiscally sound budget process.
 - One of the lowest tax rates when compared to other cities in the region.

The residents of the city are unaware of these strengths. The Task Force believes that the residents have confidence in the city. The budget process has resulted in high-level services, even though we do have a low tax rate. With appropriate discussions and an education process, the residents will retain their confidence and the city will establish credibility to move forward.

- Fiscal problems are imminent due to compression factors inherent in the tax structure. Additional revenue sources must be found to maintain and add services.
 - The Task Force identified a process for the city to follow:
 - Communicate/educate/market to celebrate what we do well in managing finances to do as much or more as any other community with less money. Also assist local businesses by creating a positive community environment to help build identity.
 - Communication should occur through multiple channels. The city should plan a series of communications over a period of time to get the message out in the media about what good jobs the city and businesses are doing.
 - Community meetings, activities and focus group meetings – provide opportunities for two-way communications.

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- In time, when the good things that the city is doing become better understood, then review the budget and how money is being spent. Challenge people to help identify other things that we should be doing and how we are going to pay for them – discover different revenues.
- Continue to work with the state to identify ways to fund local services.

Recommendation 2 – Economic Development – Presented by Task Force Member Mike Stevenson:

- Economic development and a healthy business sector are critical for a financially stable and vibrant community.
- The city has a lot to offer businesses, but it needs to be more creative and proactive in attracting quality businesses that citizens want, especially downtown.
- Engage the citizens to identify the types of business that will keep them here and encourage them to shop locally.
- Positive interactions between the business community and city personnel are critical.
- The city should work to identify business types or clusters to attract new businesses and develop the business community.
- Solicit input from the business community about Tigard's unique potential that makes it attractive for investments.
- Pacific Highway is a major presence in the community. This road provides a major route through the city; however, it is important that it should meet the requirements of City of Tigard residents. The beautification of Pacific Highway could improve the overall image of Tigard.
- More public/private investments are needed in the downtown to spur investments.
- Develop and implement a competitive economic development strategy engaging members of the business community and citizens.
- Focus on strategies for specific areas.
- Find ways to leverage private investment.
- Emphasize with the citizens the importance of doing business locally.
- Establish a dedicated, full-time economic development staff position and an economic development commission.
- Renew a focus on community aesthetics and beautification – through a public/private partnership.

Recommendation 3 – Identity/Vision for the City of Tigard – Presented by Task Force Member Melody Graeber:

- The city needs a strategic plan that clearly articulates what it hopes to accomplish and supports the city's identity.
- Call for strong, constant and ongoing communication with the public.
- A strong community uniqueness will help create a connection for the people to be more than just satisfied with Tigard as a place to live.

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- A vibrant downtown with a community gathering place is important for connecting citizens to their community.
- Reinforce and strengthen the city's brand through signage, print materials and electronic communication.
- Obtain a Tigard zipcode, distinct from Portland to help foster a stronger business connection to the community. State Representative Margaret Doherty is exploring a resolution for this issue.

Recommendation 4 – Marketing/Education/Communication – Presented by Task Force Member Representative Margaret Doherty:

- Common threads among all the recommendations from the Task Force include addressing communication and promoting Tigard.
- Develop a communication strategy that does a better job celebrating what we do well and, at the same time, conveys the financial realities without using “scare tactics.”
- Tigard offers open processes to its citizens regarding how money is spent, how we budget and how we develop programs.
- Ongoing communication to citizens is critical to address the financial future.
- The communication strategy would include what the city is currently doing along with becoming more visible in community activities.
- The communication needs to be proactive. Services the city offers need to be marketed.
- The Task Force believes the city runs a “lean and mean” machine – we offer a lot of services even though there have been cutbacks. People need to know what the significant consequences have been with regard to cutbacks such as the closure of the library on Thursdays and the reductions to many of the youth service programs. On balance, Tigard continues to offer a great park system, many businesses are still open and residents are safe.
- Work with the Tigard Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the success of businesses.
- Become more involved in events, including those that are school sponsored, and talk directly to citizens who attend.

Recommendation 5 – Partnerships – Presented by Task Force Member Troy Mears:

- Partnerships should be an integral part of the city's financial strategy. The city uses partnerships in many forms throughout city operations.
- Continue to conduct periodic reviews of programs and services throughout the year.
- Citizen volunteers serve the city well; members of all the city boards and commissions are volunteers.
- Potential for partnering with the Tigard-Tualatin School District on facility use.
- Develop a robust public/private partnership with a strategy for downtown development.
- Survey the citizens about interest in providing recreational opportunities or facilities through partnerships.

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Recommendation 6 – Next Public Dollar – Presented by Task Force Member Mike Duyck

- This was the fundamental question to the Task Force from the Mayor: *“If Tigard were to acquire a new public dollar, what would it fund and where would it come from?”*
- The answer to this question will come from the community by implementing the components of Task Force Recommendations. Ask the residents what they want to see in the community – get very specific through surveys to determine what services are wanted and needed. Provide information about how much services cost.
- During the economic downturn, the reductions the city has made have been admirable. The city has done an exceptional job of reducing staff, staying within budget and running as efficiently as possible. The committee feels there is not much more that can be “squeezed out.”
- Develop a cohesive strategy and the Task Force is supportive of looking at creating a citywide strategic plan.
- The city has an outstanding group of citizens who are supportive of the city.
- Communication using multiple media cannot be over-emphasized.
- The Task Force unanimously concurred that the Tigard citizens have confidence in their leadership that financial issues can be addressed based on past and current financial challenges.
- The Task Force members were secure in the city’s determination and ability to ask for recommendations from the community about city services, consider additional funding options and then follow through.
- The Task Force sees incredible potential in the city to become a standout community in the region.

Finance and Information Services Department Director LaFrance introduced additional Task Force members present.

- Jessica Cousineau advised of her support and agreement with the Task Force members’ comments tonight.
- Tom Woodruff said he was somewhat disappointed that there was no “quick fix.” The concurrence of the Task Force was that there are ways that additional revenue can be raised, while no one ever likes to see more taxes or fees. But, before considering additional revenue, more work needs to be done in the community to make the case that the city needs the funds and will use them wisely.
- Jason Rogers noted appreciation for being involved in the process. The Task Members came into the process hoping to find a “silver bullet” that would answer the mayor’s fundamental question about what to fund should a new tax dollar be available. The solution offered by the Task Force is a package of things that could become that “silver bullet” if implemented collectively to move the city towards more prosperous times.

Task Force Member Duyck concluded the report from the group extending compliments to the city for setting up the process.

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Mayor Dirksen said it is clear from the Task Force report that there is more work to do; continued dialogue between this group and the council will be needed. He acknowledged Task Force member Woodruff's comments about hoping to find a "silver bullet – a quick fix," and while it would have been nice to find a solution, the mayor said he did not really expect to find one. The city will embark on looking for ways to turn the Task Force's recommendations into specific actions. The mayor opened the floor to the City Council for questions or comments.

- Councilor Wilson commented that the last time the city did something like this was for the "Tigard Beyond Tomorrow" visioning project in the late 90's. He appreciates the recommendations from the Task Force for specific actions the city can take. Councilor Wilson said he was pleased to see a number of elements the city has been working on or talking about starting.
- Councilor Henderson thanked the Task Force for their work. He supported the process and, if feasible, would like to see a similar process undertaken annually. He agreed with the importance of reaching out to the public to let them know what the city is doing and to solicit what they want to see done. Councilor Henderson referred to common threads of needs; i.e., economic development and communication. He said he would be willing to work on the recommendations proposed by the Task Force.
- Councilor Woodard commented on the wealth of good information provided in the report. He said the report underscored for him that fundamental changes must be made. He referred to the local, state and national hard economic climate and the need to be prudent and to look at all types of opportunities. He appreciated the recommendation to solicit input from the citizens. Councilor Woodard was happy to see the recommendation to add to the city organization an individual with economic development expertise to help identify policies and look for opportunities. He supported the notion that recreation can provide opportunities to add to the economic health of a community. He supported the concept of partnerships. He offered the idea of real-time voting at certain venues to ask people to cast their vote on issues as one way to determine the general will of the community.
- Council President Buehner thanked the Task Force for their hard work. She would like to see the Task Force continue to work. She commented on the readability and valuable information contained in the report and said she would like to see a copy mailed to every citizen in Tigard to start the education process. One of the issues that will be challenging will be the hiring of an economic development person or a recreation person in light of the fiscal constraints being experienced by the city. She anticipates additional budget-related issues coming from the state legislature affecting local governments in the short term. This means the city needs to remain extremely fiscally conservative. Council President Buehner said that while she agrees an effort should be made to educate people, the primary emphasis is to share the financial realities the city is facing. "We can't cut anymore...we can't cover up the shortfalls anymore..." The only way we can look to fund other programs is for some sort of local option levy in the future. She said she hoped some of the Task Force members would be willing to work on a strategy to assist the city in putting together a plan for what is needed, including the possibility of a local option levy proposal. She commented on the need to lobby at the state legislature to take local option levies out of compression.

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- Councilor Henderson said the information from the Task Force comes at the exact time that it is needed since the city is headed into its new budget cycle and council goal setting. He expressed thanks for Assistant City Manager Newton’s facilitation of the group – her expertise and knowledge of the city’s history provided a good foundation for the group’s charge.
- > Assistant City Manager Newton introduced Task Force Member Barry Albertson who was also present.

Ms. Newton said that staff hoped the City Council would accept the Task Force Report and work with staff to start implementing the recommendations.

Motion by Council President Buehner, seconded by Councilor Wilson, to accept the Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Task Force Report and take a look at implementing the recommendations.

The motion was approved by a unanimous vote of City Council present.

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| Mayor Dirksen | Yes |
| Council President Buehner | Yes |
| Councilor Henderson | Yes |
| Councilor Wilson | Yes |
| Councilor Woodard | Yes |

Mayor Dirksen thanked the members of the Task Force. The mayor presented each of the members a certificate of acknowledgement.

3. COUNCIL WILSON’S FAREWELL REMARKS

This meeting is the final council meeting for Councilor Wilson. Councilor Wilson said, initially, he was disinclined to give a final talk but decided he would like to say a few things “from the heart.” His farewell remarks are paraphrased and attached (Attachment 1).

> **Non Agenda – Presentation to Mayor Dirksen: Dirksen Nature Park**

Councilor Wilson made a special presentation to Mayor Dirksen. The mayor was unavailable for the council meeting held December 11, 2012. The council took action that night to honor Mayor Dirksen’s accomplishments to the City of Tigard. The council, through Resolution No. 12-52, named the Summer Creek Property the “Dirksen Nature Park.” This 48-acre property, bordered by Fowler Middle School, Tiedeman Avenue and Tigard Street will soon become Tigard’s largest nature park and the second largest city park.

Mayor Dirksen thanked Councilor Wilson for his comments. He expressed his appreciation for such a “startling and stunning tribute.”

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4. MAYOR DIRKSEN'S FAREWELL REMARKS

This is Mayor Dirksen's final council meeting as mayor. A copy of his farewell remarks is attached.

8:49 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council President Buehner, seconded by Councilor Wilson, to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was approved by a unanimous vote of City Council present.

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| Mayor Dirksen | Yes |
| Council President Buehner | Yes |
| Councilor Henderson | Yes |
| Councilor Wilson | Yes |
| Councilor Woodard | Yes |

/s/ Catherine Wheatley

Catherine Wheatley, City Recorder

Attest:

/s/ Marland H. Henderson

Mayor, City of Tigard

Council President

Date: February 26, 2013